

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 24-35 are allowed and for indicating that claims 4-20 are allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1-38 remain pending in the instant application. Claims 1-3, 21-23 and 36-38 presently stand rejected. Claims 1, 4, and 36 are amended herein. Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 21, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Xiong et al (US 6,671,256).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include substantially all of the subject matter of allowed claim 4. Accordingly, claim 1 now includes subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner.

The dependent claims are novel over the prior art of record for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with their respective independent claims, in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the instant § 102 rejections of the dependent claims be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Xiong in view of Sahasrabuddhe et al (US 2002/0159114).

Claims 36-38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fumagalli et al (US 7,092,633) in view of Mishra (US 2002/01866433).

Independent claim 36 has been amended to include substantially similar subject matter as the combination of claims 1 and 4. Accordingly, claim 36 now includes subject matter deemed allowable by the Examiner.

The dependent claims are nonobvious over the prior art of record for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with their respective independent claims, in addition to adding further limitations of their own. Accordingly, Applicants

respectfully request that the instant § 103 rejections of the dependent claims be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that the applicable rejections have been overcome and all claims remaining in the application are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative at (206) 292-8600 if the Examiner believes that an interview might be useful for any reason.

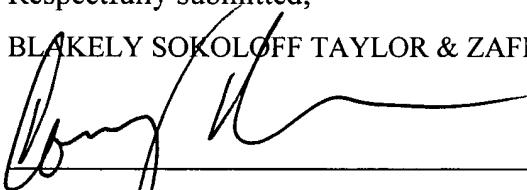
CHARGE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

It is not believed that extensions of time are required beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a). Any fees required therefore are hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-2666. Please credit any overpayment to the same deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY SOKOLOFF TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

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